

DUPLEX

Social Progress



*Featuring the Social Deliverances
168th General Assembly
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.
with
Commentary*

JULY 1956

Social Progress

Published by the Department of Social Education and Action of the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., to provide a forum for the Church on subjects of social concern for Christians. It includes program resources, legislative developments, and guides to worship, study, and action for leaders of social action groups in local churches, presbyteries, synods, presbytery and synodical societies. Articles represent the opinions of the authors—not the official policy of the Department of Social Education and Action or of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

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*From This
Vantage
Point...*

THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

PRESENTED here are the social pronouncements adopted by the 168th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in Philadelphia on May 30, 1956.

The pronouncements themselves appear in two columns at the top of each page. Appropriate comments are printed in wide measure at the bottom (relatively speaking) of each page. These comments are intended to be useful in interpreting the pronouncements and in suggesting how they may be used and applied.

It is important to keep in mind the process by which the pronouncements are developed. Recommendations are prepared during the year by the Counseling Committee on Social Education and Action. This is a representative Committee composed according to a formula approved by the General Assembly. These recommendations are transmitted through the Department of Social Education and Action and the Board of Christian Education to the General Assembly. They are published in the "Blue Book" which is sent to all the Commissioners prior to the General Assembly. The Standing Committee on Social Education and Action constituted by the General Assembly prepares a report based upon its study of the recommendations from the Counseling Committee. The Standing Committee this year met for more than fifty hours before presenting its report. The report was vigorously debated and somewhat amended prior to its being adopted by the General Assembly.

As to the "authority" of the pronouncements, it is important to say that they represent the mind of the Church because of the nature of the General Assembly and the meaning of its actions. We believe that God alone is Lord of the conscience. No man is "bound" or "compelled" by the pronouncements, but they should be taken seriously by every agency and court of the Church and by every minister and member.

—*The SEA Staff*

Social Pronouncements of the 168th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.

As adopted from the Report of the Standing Committee of Social Education and Action in Philadelphia, Pa., May 30, 1956

"THE THINGS THAT MAKE FOR PEACE"

Believing that we live in a world that is under the dominion of the sovereign God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that his rule is fully revealed only to his Church through Jesus Christ;

Believing that both ignorance of God's dominion and the refusal to acknowledge and obey him lead men and nations into rebellion against his purposes; and

Believing that this rebellion creates political, economic, and social structures of power that may come under the rule of evil and seek to oppose the sovereignty of God at tragic human cost,

The 168th General Assembly

Reaffirms its conviction that neither the Church as the body of

Christ, nor any judicatory within it, such as the session, nor individual Christians as members, may ignore or be neutral toward the forces of evil in the world;

Believes that the creation of structures and channels by which love can achieve justice in all the relationships of men and nations is possible;

And calls upon the churches and their members to witness to "the things that make for peace"

- in international affairs
- in racial and cultural relations
- in economic life
- in community relations
- in education
- in citizenship
- in civil liberties
- in other areas of social concern.

Warranty for Christian Social Action

Many Christians assume that the single object of God's transforming love is personality, that Christ came into the world to reconcile persons, and not the world, to God. We quickly affirm that the good for persons is a principal focus of God's action. Yet the object of redemption cannot be confined to persons.

First, we must confess that all things are created in and through Christ, and that he came to reconcile the world to the Father. The creation in all its unity and complexity is the object of the redeeming love of God. Christian social action must be concerned not only with the realms of personality and inter-

I. IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

BELOVING that the attainment of peace requires an international organization through which the nations can work together, and reaffirming previous pronouncements in support of the United Nations,

The 168th General Assembly
Acclaims the admission of sixteen

new member states as a major step toward universality;

Calls upon our Government to recognize the urgency of whole-hearted participation in United Nations agencies and programs; and

Urges community groups to an informed support of the UN.

personal relations, but also with the patterns of relationships, the forms and structures of the social order, which exist in a more rigid and depersonalized form among us.

Secondly, an analysis of our culture lays bare the interrelationships of person to professional role, to political decisions, to economic policy both in the industrial bureaucracy and in the Federal Government. We cannot extract individual persons out of their relationships to other persons and institutions, and hope by a "soul surgery" on them to accomplish the full redeeming work of God. To think in this manner is unrealistic and unjust in terms both of theology and of the social sciences.

The question is this: What are the avenues of action open to us as we seek to remove the obstacles to the realization of God's victory over the powers of sin and death? Our task in Christian social action is to find the patterns and forms of life through which God's redeeming action can be manifest.

"The Things That Make for Peace"

The "theme" of the pronouncements is a phrase from Luke 19: 42—words of Jesus as he pondered the fate of Jerusalem, and wept. In our modern, complicated world we should see that the things that make for war and peace are to be found not merely in the field of foreign relations but in nearly every area of our common life. The General Assembly calls attention to seven areas which are seedbeds of "the things that make for peace."

The United Nations

Every year since the San Francisco Conference in 1945, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. has affirmed strong support of the United Nations, not as a supranational organization, but as an instrument by which sovereign nations can meet together, plan together, and act together "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" and to advance human welfare.

It should be pointed out that the United Nations is not a "world government." It is made up of member nations each of which maintains full sovereignty and self-determination. The United Nations cannot do any more for the cause of peace and human welfare than the member nations want it to do. If the UN fails in any grand effort, it is only because the member nations, or an important one or two of them, do not let it succeed. The wonder is that the UN has succeeded so often and so spectacularly in this kind of world.

Disarmament

Believing that a just and durable peace requires the reduction of all types of weapons concurrently, with effective means of inspection and control,

The 168th General Assembly

Urges our Government to continue to initiate negotiations for the elimination of weapons of mass destruc-

tion, pursuing such negotiations vigorously within the collective security concepts of the United Nations, when possible, and to continue to make unremitting efforts to find a solution to the present deadlock over methods of disarmament;

Commends our Government for its support of the Atomic Radiation Committee of the United Nations in its study of the effects on human be-

The General Assembly repeatedly has warned churches and church members against malicious attacks on the United Nations by persons and groups whose avowed purpose is "to get the United States out of the United Nations and the United Nations out of the United States." Honest criticism is often useful, but many of the attacks being made on the United Nations by irresponsible persons and groups are uninformed, unfair, and misleading.

An important event of 1955 was the donation of a large rug to the United Nations by the Women's Organizations of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. This rug which was woven in Quito, Ecuador, is used in a hall in the delegates' section of the United Nations Headquarters in New York. There was a presentation ceremony last September.

The General Assembly this year hailed the admission of sixteen new member states to the United Nations as "a major step toward universality." Implied here is support of the principle of "universal membership" in the United Nations. Students of international relations generally uphold the principle of universality (the admission of all countries which endorse the Charter and are able to live up to its minimum requirements) as over against the idea of selectivity (on any basis other than the provisions of the UN Charter). At the close of the tenth session of the United Nations General Assembly last fall the following sixteen new nations were admitted: Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Ceylon, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Laos, Libya, Nepal, Portugal, Rumania, and Spain. Two nations whose applications were pending for some time were not admitted—Japan, sponsored by the Western bloc of nations, and Outer Mongolia, belonging to the Soviet orbit. Pending also is the application of The People's Republic of China. The admission of Red China to the United Nations is a very sensitive question among the Western nations and has been the subject of wide discussion and disagreement. It is possible that there may be a strong movement to seat Red China in 1956 or 1957.

Disarmament

The recently announced reduction in the size of the Soviet army by 1,200,000 men should not be regarded necessarily as mere propaganda, nor yet simply as a shift in emphasis to other forms of military power. At the same time the significance of this reduction in man power should not be overestimated since, as has been pointed out repeatedly in the press, no "effective means of inspection and control" are available to check the validity of the Soviet announcement. Furthermore, unilateral reductions in armaments of whatever type are not nearly as effective steps toward peace as are reductions

ings of radiation resulting from atomic experiments;

Urges the United Nations, through its appropriate channels, to investigate the alleged disruptions and insecurities to the native peoples of the Pacific area caused by the testing of atomic and hydrogen weapons;

Calls upon Christians to be willing to accept reasonable mutual risks which may be involved in such new and untried proposals as aerial inspection.

Technical Assistance and Economic Aid

Believing that a nation commonly called Christian can and should serve human needs not primarily on a basis

of shortsighted self-interest, but in the larger context of human welfare;

Acknowledging that the foreign policy of all nations is developed in terms of their own self-interest, but believing that what ultimately serves the total good best serves the individual state;

Aware of the continuing need to stress economic aid rather than military assistance to underdeveloped areas and conscious of the fact that Communist nations are using economic aid as an effective political weapon;

Believing that there is need for assurance of continued economic aid to underdeveloped regions;

Believing also that international

made "concurrently" with the reduction of all types of weapons, as the General Assembly believes to be required.

As to "aerial inspection," the reference is to the daring proposal made by President Dwight Eisenhower in the summer of 1955. In addressing the "Summit" Conference at Geneva on July 21, 1955, President Eisenhower said this:

"Gentlemen, since I have been working on this memorandum to present to this Conference, I have been searching my heart and mind for something that I could say here that could convince everyone of the great sincerity of the United States in approaching this problem of disarmament.

"I should address myself for a moment principally to the delegates from the Soviet Union, because our two great countries admittedly possess new and terrible weapons in quantities which do give rise in other parts of the world, or reciprocally, to the fears and dangers of surprise attack.

"I propose, therefore, that we take a practical step, that we begin an arrangement, very quickly, as between ourselves—immediately. These steps would include:

"To give to each other a complete blueprint of our military establishments . . . from one end of our countries to the other; lay out the establishments and provide the blueprints to each other.

"Next, to provide within our countries facilities for aerial photography to the other country—we to provide you the facilities within our country, ample facilities for aerial reconnaissance, where you can make all the pictures you choose and take them to your country to study, you to provide exactly the same facilities for us and we to make these examinations, and by this step to convince the world that we are providing as between ourselves against the possibility of great surprise attack, thus lessening danger and relaxing tension. Likewise we will make more easily attainable a comprehensive and effective system of inspection and disarmament, because what I propose, I assure you, would be but a beginning."

exchange of students, farmers, and other vocational groups, including churchmen, is of first importance in building world community through mutual understanding,

The 168th General Assembly

Urges our Government (1) to give assurance of appropriation of funds for economic aid on a long-term basis, (2) to review and debate foreign aid proposals without acrimony and partisan maneuvering so that decisions will be made on the basis of human welfare, and (3) to make substantial increases in programs for the distribution of agri-

cultural surpluses through agencies such as CARE, CROP, and Church World Service.

International Trade

Recognizing that our failure to participate in the Organization for Trade Co-operation may be interpreted by other nations as a withdrawal from the general international trade policies our Government has been pursuing since 1947;

Being aware that OTC does not involve any new authority to reduce tariff, does not give any additional powers to the President, does not

"In the National Interest"

A government's first duty is toward the people for whom it is constituted—their safety, their security, their well-being. This is political realism. It is impractical if not downright irresponsible to suggest that any government should act in terms other than "national self-interest."

It is the responsibility of Christian citizens to help their government, and the people too, to conceive of the national interest in terms of the interdependence of the nations in the modern world. We should clearly see that what ultimately serves the interests of the whole world community is also, in the long run, in the self-interest of our own country.

Foreign Aid

In stressing the continuing importance of technical assistance, the General Assembly does not assume that there are no strategic considerations connected with the giving of economic assistance in regions where peace is threatened by the easy access of Communist power. It is not counseling the nations to surrender every military advance in response to the new "peaceful countenance" of the Kremlin under the Khrushchev regime.

This whole section does call for a skillful balance between economic aid and military assistance with a considerably higher expenditure for the former than the present Congress seems willing to allow. We are suggesting that in developing programs of foreign assistance a primary criterion should be our ability as a nation to relieve human suffering wherever it may exist.

The General Assembly urges our Government to assure funds for economic aid on a "long-term" basis as opposed to an annual or short-term basis. When subsidy for a program is assured for only a year or so ahead, many difficulties are imposed—there can be no realistic long-range planning; only measures which can be quickly completed can be undertaken; the participating (and benefiting) nation is discouraged from setting up co-ordinated long-range procedures; great difficulty is encountered in securing and keeping suitable personnel; the efforts undertaken cannot be co-ordinated practically with long-range programs of the United Nations.

affect the authority of Congress to legislate, does not commit Congress to any future legislation, and allows the United States to retain a veto over any action which affects United States policy,

The 168th General Assembly
Urge our Congress to approve

participation in OTC as a means for administering general trade agreements and for honoring the procedures which we have already agreed to in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in order to promote and expand trade throughout the free world.

The General Assembly also urges that the discussion of foreign aid in Congress and elsewhere in the Government should be done "without acrimony and partisan maneuvering." We recall with shame some of the low-grade debate on the floors of the House and of the Senate at the time of the adoption of the original Marshall Plan in 1948.

The Government should be encouraged in its efforts to stimulate international exchange programs (students, farmers, churchmen, and other groups) and to help American travelers abroad to be genuine ambassadors of good will.

Participation in OTC

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade contains principles by which Governments agree to conduct foreign trade, and provides a means for the reduction of tariffs and other barriers to international trade through negotiation. Thirty-four Governments are associated with GATT. These countries carry on about 80 per cent of the world's trade. GATT is the principal instrument for international co-operation in matters of trade.

The United States Government has ratified GATT and is deeply concerned with its future. OTC is intended to handle trade agreements among the nations which now subscribe to GATT. Participation in OTC would mean participation in a program to which we already are committed.

The President is strongly in favor of the legislation providing for our involvement in OTC, and he is supported by many national groups, including the United States Council of the International Chamber of Commerce, the Committee for Economic Development, the National Farmers Union, the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Grange, the AFL-CIO, the League of Women Voters, the General Federation of Women's Clubs.

Opposed to the legislation are groups who favor high tariffs or who believe that their particular industries, such as cotton, textiles, pottery, glassware, wool, wine, and others, will be injured.

If the United States does not approve participation in OTC, this organization cannot come into existence. Our failure to join would act as a veto on OTC. The effect of our lack of approval of OTC would be very grave in terms of our relationships with other countries and would be interpreted, as the General Assembly pronouncement wisely suggests, as a withdrawal from the general international trade policy of our Government.

War and Peace

Believing that the nature and practice of modern warfare are contrary to the spirit and teachings of Jesus Christ,

The 168th General Assembly

Instructs our Department of Social Education and Action to redouble its efforts to so educate our Church;

Urges Christians to give renewed emphasis to the subject of this report, "The Things That Make for Peace," restudying the principles and methods of modern warfare in the light of our Christian faith and the guidance of the Bible and the Holy Spirit, so that we will act as God would have us in this matter of life and death for our civilization.

Education for Peace

We believe that war is one of the most tragic consequences of our corrupted freedom to rebel against God and to submit to powers he has dethroned through Jesus Christ.

The words of our theme, "the things that make for peace," imply a plea for realism. When the issues are as great as they are now in international relations (life or death, freedom or bondage, for vast numbers of persons) it is immoral to be impractical. For example, it is possible for a man of good will to hold forth for some immediately unrealizable goal in foreign relations so strongly as to undermine or obstruct other less glamorous but more practical measures. Thus some of the most subtle enemies of the United Nations are highly intentioned men and women who would like to transform it now into a full-fledged world government.

It is commonly said that two "massive realities" dominate international affairs today. One is the conflict between an aggressive Soviet Communism and the non-Soviet world. The other is the revolutionary upheaval in vast areas of the world.

We would like to suggest that a third reality is very much to be taken into account—a rising tide of good will, a growing determination among the common peoples of all of the nations to achieve a just and lasting peace. Back of this desire for peace is not so much fear as the conviction that war today would be total and that total war would bring the solution of nothing and the ruin of everything.

What is the role of the churches in the search for world peace and order? Is it not to shed the light of God upon the acts of men as they affect international relations? Let the churches be as specific and realistic as possible in affirming "the things that make for peace," in encouraging our Government to perform acts of international good will, in supporting men in public life whose influence is on the side of international understanding and co-operation, in helping church members to be "peacemakers."

What can an individual do for peace? He can (1) be informed about world affairs, (2) support "good will" efforts in his community and beyond, (3) practice good will in his community, (4) promote the world mission of his Church, (5) support the Government in its efforts for peace, (6) encourage peace action in his local church.

The women's organizations of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. are to be commended for undertaking a study of the United Nations. A circle study guide, *The United Nations and Us—Learning to Live and Work Together*, has been prepared which contains five studies planned for use in circles and small discussion groups in local churches.

II. IN RACIAL AND CULTURAL RELATIONS

NOTING that there are serious racial problems to be faced in all sections of our country;

Observing that the problems confronting Christians in the South, the region affected most deeply and directly by the Supreme Court decisions outlawing racial segregation in public schools and other public services, are generally quite different from the problems confronting Christians in most other areas of the nation;

Realizing that the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. is not a sectional but a national body with members and churches in every one of the 48 states,

- The 168th General Assembly

Addresses itself selectively to our churches and members throughout the nation with respect to the Christian responsibility that the Word of God and the mind of the Church lays upon them, in facing the critical problems of race relations.

"No Problem"?

Realizing (1) that nowhere in our land can Negroes, and to a lesser extent other minority persons, escape the indignity of segregation or discrimination in one form or another, and (2) that the community or church that feels it has no problem because there is no present crisis may have an especially difficult problem;

Race Relations—a National Problem

The opening paragraphs of the section on racial and cultural relations repudiate the making of comparisons as to the seriousness of racial problems faced in various parts of our country. While avoiding comparisons, we should point out that the problems faced in various regions of our nation are related to and sometimes derived from each other.

In recognizing that the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. has churches and members in every one of the forty-eight states, with over 400,000 members living in the Southern and border states, General Assembly disclaims the misnomer by which our Church has sometimes been called erroneously the "Northern Presbyterian Church."

In addressing itself "selectively" to churches and members throughout the nation, the General Assembly is suggesting that some of the statements on racial and cultural relations apply more directly to one part of the country than they do to another part of the country. Probably every judicatory in every section of the land will find here a pronouncement that speaks directly to its own need. Every judicatory has the responsibility of determining which of the pronouncements on racial and cultural relations applies most specifically to its own unique situation.

"No Problem"?

In some sections of our nation, particularly parts of the Midwest where very few if any minority persons live, it is common to hear expressions like, "We have no problem because no Negroes live in our town." (One lady even went so far as to say, "We have no problem in our town because no colored

Recognizing that though an increasing number of churches are actually seeking to bring all persons in their neighborhoods into membership without distinction as to race or social status, nevertheless, many churches, while morally supporting integration, are failing to implement their stand in terms of positive evangelistic effort, and some churches appear actually to be opposing integration,

The 168th General Assembly

Enjoins ministers and members of our churches

1. To stop talking about having "no problem" in situations where tension does not exist and the problem is therefore concealed,

2. To stop being content with a mere confession of guilt apart from deeds of repentance,

3. To stop pointing the finger of accusation at areas of high tension or conflict,

4. To begin serious, prayerful study where there is no present tension,

5. To bring about in small groups encounters and frank conversations with minority persons of comparable education and experience, and specialists in the field of human relations,

6. To welcome people of all races in the life and work of their churches,

7. To evangelize in the homes of nearby residents without regard to race in order to bring them into the fellowship of the church.

Residential Segregation

Emphasizing that it is the policy and purpose of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. to work for a nonsegregated society as well as a nonsegregated church;

Noting (1) that in many sections of our country real progress has

person is ever allowed to remain overnight.") In other sections of our country there may be small numbers of minority persons, but because they have not pressed for the rights which are theirs by virtue of our Constitution, no tension or crisis exists. In such communities the General Assembly believes there is frequently a peculiar and difficult problem—difficult because it is concealed and therefore not recognized.

The problem in many such communities lies in such factors as these: (1) the existence of mass racial stereotypes and attitudes which, under different circumstances, produce the very tensions, crises, and injustices that have so recently torn certain sections of our country; (2) the characteristic lack of any sense of involvement in or responsibility for the racial indignities and injustices that are common in other parts of our nation and our world; (3) the consequent failure on the part of large numbers of Christians in such communities either to throw their support behind movements for racial justice, or to equip the children of their community to live under integrated conditions elsewhere.

Desegregated Neighborhoods

The phrase "covenants of open occupancy" suggests a number of specific possibilities, such as (1) Christians making known to neighbors whose houses are for sale that they would welcome into the neighborhood any new residents of good character regardless of their race, creed, or national origin; and (2) Christians announcing to their neighbors that, if there is a tendency toward panic selling, they intend to stay put, their houses are not for sale;

been made in eliminating segregation in such fields as employment, transportation, hotel and restaurant accommodations, education, and other public services; (2) that in these same sections residential segregation usually continues to be a major problem; (3) that where residential desegregation has occurred it has nearly always been in older housing areas that tend to change from segregated white to segregated nonwhite because of the flight of white residents; and (4) that in most communities practically no new homes have been made available to nonwhite families,

The 168th General Assembly

Calls upon Christians who are contemplating the sale of property to see as of first importance the need of minority families for equal housing opportunities and adequate housing, and to make their houses available to all qualified purchasers without regard to race;

Directs the attention of homeowners to several studies, available from the Department of Social Education and Action, of the effect of nonwhite purchases on adjacent property values, demonstrating that values do not necessarily decline, and in fact often rise, after such purchases;

Urges sessions to bring Christians together in *covenants of open occupancy* which will stem the tendency toward "panic selling," and stabilize their neighborhoods on a nonsegregated basis.

Victims of Reprisals

Noting with respect to the Supreme Court decision affecting racial segregation in public schools:

1. That the governments of at least six states have committed themselves, with substantial support in public opinion, either to oppose absolutely or to delay as long as possible compliance with the decision;

and urging their neighbors to stay and to help the neighborhood be one of which everybody can be proud.

Covenants of open occupancy, as over against the old restrictive covenants or gentlemen's agreements that were intended to preserve the white Gentile homogeneity of neighborhoods, imply an open moral agreement among Christians in the neighborhood to sell their homes, if and when they sell, to any qualified purchaser of good character, and also to welcome such purchasers who may buy the homes of other sellers.

The New York Times, in reporting the pronouncement on residential segregation, said, "It is believed to be one of the strongest and most specific proposals on race relations ever made by a major Protestant body."

"Political Refugees in Our Own Country"

The section of the pronouncements dealing with "victims of reprisals" lists some of the pressures upon persons and groups in the South which are supporting or encouraging the desegregation of public schools in compliance with the Supreme Court decision of May 17, 1954.

The phrase "political refugees in our own country" originated in a meeting of the General Board of the National Council of Churches in Omaha, Nebraska, on December 1, 1955, and was meant to designate ministers of the gospel and lay persons who have been victims of reprisals due to their stand on racial desegregation. At the same meeting the General Board authorized Church World Service, an agency of the National Council of Churches, to use

2. That in some areas of our country groups calling themselves by such names as the White Citizens Councils have formed for the express purpose of using "every lawful means" to maintain racial segregation in all areas of life;

3. That economic pressure, intimidation, social and political pressure are commonly used, while racial violence, bloodshed, and murder are not unknown;

4. That men supporting desegregation have lost jobs, had their mortgages foreclosed, insurance policies canceled, credit cut off, and wholesale deliveries of goods stopped;

5. That some individuals, both laymen and ministers, of many denominations have taken courageous positions in their churches and communities and have been severely ostracized by friends and even family;

6. That several ministers of the gospel are known to have been forced out of their pulpits because of statements they had made or positions they had taken relative to this issue;

7. That a significant number of Presbyterian, U.S.A., members have been subjected to indignities, intimidations, beatings, cross-burnings, and harassing litigations,

The 168th General Assembly Assures members of our presbyteries and churches who may be under persecution of the corporate support of our Church and directs the Stated Clerk to give them encouragement, counsel, and other assistance as he may judge to be appropriate;

Urges Christians individually and corporately to help bear the burdens of their fellow men under persecution, by sending gifts of money to Church World Service for the relief of persons designated as "political refugees in our own country."

Job Discrimination

Noting that discrimination in employment consigns Negroes and other minority persons to the least desirable jobs without consideration of their personal qualifications or training, thereby depriving them of dignity and vocational opportunity,

available funds for the relief of such victims of reprisals, and urged constituent denominations of the National Council to make deposits in certain banks in the South for emergency loans to persons whose credit had been cut off by the actions of such groups as the White Citizens Councils. The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. has already made such a deposit.

The address of the Church World Service for those desiring to send funds is 120 E. 23d Street, New York 10, New York.

Fair Employment Practices

Even in the fifteen states and some thirty municipalities that have Fair Employment Practices legislation, Negroes still tend to be the last hired and the first fired in all but the most menial jobs.

Long-standing patterns of job discrimination in stores or industries are not automatically changed by the passing of a law. This continuance of the pattern is frequently due not to ill will on the part of the employers so much as to lethargy, red tape, and other factors which produce a lag between a change in public policy and private follow-through.

The 168th General Assembly

Urges Presbyterian employers to take such steps as may be necessary to break the pattern of discrimination in employment;

Urges Christians to give individual and corporate support to employers who have courageously employed Negroes on a nondiscriminatory basis, prevailing patterns and attitudes of their community to the contrary;

And urges Christians to give support in the most appropriate ways

for a Federal Fair Employment Practices law.

Rights for All

Recognizing the efforts of those responsible persons and organizations that have sought through the courts by legal means to secure Constitutional rights for all citizens,

The 168th General Assembly

Urges Christians to give them their prayerful support and to participate in their efforts.

Those employers who seek to establish a nondiscriminatory hiring policy in communities where no FEPC exists and where community sentiment is against such a policy, especially in the South but also in the border states and in many parts of the so-called North, are pioneers who need every ounce of support Christians can give them.

Court Action "to Secure These Rights"

The New York Times, in commenting on the General Assembly pronouncements, pointed out that the section referring to court action was seen "by many commissioners as an extending of the Church's hand of fellowship to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People." It is also possible to see in this brief section a qualified support of the American Civil Liberties Union.

The NAACP and the ACLU are two responsible organizations whose main energies are directed to the securing and defending of Constitutional rights by litigation in the courts.

One responsible authority on the South, a white man whose home is in Atlanta, Georgia, has observed that the NAACP is making possible by court action a quiet revolution in which an exploited people for the first time in the history of the world have been able to seek their rights without resorting to the methods of sabotage, bombing, train dynamiting, and other acts of violence that are characterizing somewhat similar revolutions elsewhere in the world.

It is simply not realistic to suggest that the NAACP is as "extreme" on the one side as the White Citizens Councils and the Ku Klux Klan are extreme on the other side. The very existence of the NAACP with its moderate but persistent efforts to achieve equality through the courts is preventing the emergence of movements which rely on violence and which really would deserve to be called extreme.

Especially for the South

In an article in the June, 1956, issue of *Harper's* magazine, William Faulkner points out that one of the most powerful forces in the South today is Christianity. He raises the question of why Christians in the areas of most critical tension have not played a more prominent role in moving their communities toward peaceful compliance with the Supreme Court decision.

Corporate Action

Noting that every major denomination has voiced support of the Supreme Court's decisions, but that pressures on individuals and churches at the local level to conform to the prevailing mood have been extreme in many localities;

Being aware that some Christians, both laymen and ministers, have supported the programs of White Citizens Councils and like groups, and a few have assumed positions of leadership in them, and that many Christians are urging ministers not to take positions against segregation;

Acknowledging the impossibility of apportioning degrees of guilt or innocence for a sin that afflicts the whole body of the Church, and that it is the Church's mission to be a prophetic voice of God's judgment and an instrument of his reconciling grace;

Remembering that the Scripture

enjoins us all to "teach and admonish one another" (Col. 3: 16), and to "stir up one another to love and good works" (Heb. 10: 24), and believing Christians acting corporately and together are stronger in the Spirit than when left to act only as individuals,

The 168th General Assembly

Enjoins presbyteries and, especially, church sessions to consider prayerfully, in the light of the testimony of Scripture for love and justice, the common voice of the Church Universal against racial segregation, and the developments cited above, the corporate response God asks of them in the specific situations in which they find themselves; and

Urges sessions of churches located in communities of racial tension to find ways of bringing Christians and other citizens together in small groups across racial lines to discuss their common problems and goals relative to desegregation.

One reason for this is that white Christians who support racial desegregation are isolated from one another and do not know who their allies are in many areas of severe tension and conflict. Unlike some areas in the North where, regardless of private feelings, the climate of public feeling makes it socially unacceptable to defend segregation in principle, in some areas of the South the climate of public opinion is such that it is socially unacceptable to defend desegregation in principle.

This has meant in practical terms that those Christians who have supported desegregation have in some areas like Mississippi been forced underground. The import of the General Assembly's pronouncement on corporate action is that the sessions of local churches should corporately face the realities of their unique situation in study and prayer, and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit to determine what their response must be in obedience to God's will.

An illustration of what can happen when Christians stand together as one in a corporate response may be found in Montgomery, Alabama. There, to be sure, the Christian corporate response is that of the entire Negro community, but in Montgomery it is impossible "to pick off" an individual Negro without having to face 50,000 Negro Christians who stand and walk together and bear the burdens of anyone who is under persecution.

This is the epitome of corporate Christian action and witness.

III. IN ECONOMIC LIFE

BELEIVING that God's revelation in Christ illumines for Christians the redemptive possibilities for all persons in our country and throughout the world in the present economy of abundance;

Realizing, nevertheless, the warnings of Scripture against the seductions of prosperity; the fact that millions of people in the world are hungry or ill-fed while we enjoy an abundance of all things in great surplus; the uncertain position of the American farmer; the existence of pockets of poverty and under-employment; the grave danger of easy consumer credit which tempts to uncritical buying and gross materialism; the urgent need for planning such programs as slum clearance, public health, public wel-

fare, and public works as constructive substitutes for military expenditures which now prop our economy, when the international situation permits a substantial reduction in defense spending,

The 168th General Assembly Calls to the attention of the churches the findings of the Third National Study Conference on the Church and Economic Life of the National Council of Churches held in Pittsburgh, April, 1956, on "The Christian Conscience and an Economy of Abundance," which are commended by the Presbyterian delegation attending the conference and by the Department of Social Education and Action, which participated in it,

And concurs with the key empha-

The Economy of Abundance

Economic scarcity and austerity are not Christian virtues in a world where there is such inequitable distribution of economic wealth.

Christians in America cannot realistically call for increased private investment in underdeveloped countries by American businessmen, for increased public investment by the U.S. Government in terms of loans and grants, for greater trade, without at the same time supporting the continuance of an expanding economy at home. A great danger here, of course, is materialism. The pronouncement on economic life does well to remind us of the "seductions of prosperity" while at the same time affirming "the redemptive possibilities" in our present economy of abundance.

A searching insight is included in one of the "section reports" of the recent Third National Study Conference on the Church and Economic Life: "Nature is not only the creation of God; it has become in Christ the very theater of the incarnation. This means that God the Creator has related himself anew to our world as God the Redeemer. By this divine event God gave all physical reality a special sacramental character which requires of the Christian a profound reverence for all physical creation. Just as the apostle calls upon Christians to 'lift up your total personalities as a sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto Him . . .' so man's entire use of and enjoyment of nature is the economic face of his worship. Abuse of natural resources, in this view, becomes an act of blasphemy."

We have not heard this emphasis in Christianity since the time of Saint Francis. It is revolutionary. This is the affirmation of an economy of abundance as a way of glorifying God and enjoying him forever.

sis of the Message to the Churches from the Pittsburgh Conference that: "*For the first time in human experience it appears possible that enough can be produced to meet the basic needs of man. We may refer to this new period as an age of abundance in contrast with past ages of economic scarcity. The promises of this economy are great, but its perils are so real that we cannot evade the challenges which this new age brings to the Christian conscience. To the shallow expression, 'We never had it so good,' the Christian must reply, 'We never had such heavy demands upon the Christian conscience.'*"

Conservation and Natural Resources

Believing that God has made the world and has set man therein with ability to treasure or plunder its abundant wealth of resources; and that allegiance to our Redeemer Christ means, in part, the dedication of our entrusted gifts of nature for the common good,

The 168th General Assembly Commends our Federal Government, research centers, and participating industries for recognizing that we stand on the threshold of a tremendous development in the production and use of nuclear energy for daily living; and urges that forceful and imaginative action be taken to develop fully this source of energy to undergird our expanding economy;

Urges state and Federal Government agencies and legislators to carry out public policies that will give state and national forests and grasslands protection from exploitation and selfish waste; that will initiate or continue progress against air and water pollution;

Enjoins the churches to observe Rural Life Sunday each May by alerting their members to Christian concern for farm problems and by encouraging studies that will create awareness of the vast yet limited resources of water, soil, minerals, timber, and wildlife;

Encourages farmers and ranchers

Our Natural Resources

Conservation is not simply preserving what we have, as many people believe. It includes both management and use of our resources. It is an aspect of "economizing," deciding among conflicting or alternative uses, and choosing a proper disposition of natural resources.

Most business economists and corporation executives are planning for a future (within the next twenty or thirty years) when an unprecedented amount of energy will be available for industrial purposes. This includes not only atomic energy, but solar energy and many new uses of sea water. Even so, we believe that government and business leaders have been too cautious in their estimates of the effects of these revolutionary discoveries. Hence our pronouncements rightly urge "forceful and imaginative action."

In the statement on conservation, we take into account the phenomenal growth of population all over the world, including the daily increase in our own country of 7,500 persons, the expected population of 220,000,000 by 1975, and a requirement of at least 25 per cent greater production of food and fiber for the sustenance of our growing population. Present soil inventories show how urgent it is to protect our lands from erosion and from

to co-operate with the Soil Conservation Service of the Department of Agriculture in its land capability inventory program, which provides a thorough acre-by-acre examination of the land and valuable data about the most appropriate use of cropland, forest land, grassland, and wildlife reservations;

Urges that Christian conscience be brought to bear on the wasteful use of water, and on the development of public policy to utilize our water resources and hydroelectric potential;

Commends church and civic groups and individuals for their prompt and generous aid to flood and disaster victims, and for the continued interest in rehabilitation in disaster areas.

Agriculture

Observing that the nation's farmers have met the challenge of an expanding economy by producing an abundance of food and fiber, but

that the nation has not met its challenge in handling this production; that it has not given the farmer an opportunity to receive a fair wage for his husbandry; that it has not utilized fully this bounteous production to feed the hungry or clothe the naked;

Believing that lamentations over "burdensome surpluses" are out of place in a world where many hundreds of millions of people suffer the pangs of hunger from the cradle to the grave;

Recognizing that a sound agriculture is essential to a sound economy, and that the American farmer is caught in a cost-price squeeze, and that unless this situation is promptly corrected the farm depression will have serious repercussions on the rest of the economy;

Bearing in mind that only responsible leadership by the Federal Government in co-operation with the farmers can ensure effective action in meeting these problems,

further thoughtless and selfish waste. There is an urgent need also for comprehensive long-range planning for water development with the co-operation, rather than the competition, of Federal Government agencies, states, and private interests. For Christians, the proper management and use of our natural resources should be seen as a part of man's obligation (stewardship) to God. The natural world functions according to laws established by God and revealed to man as he seeks to discover God's purposes. If man disregards God's laws in the realm of nature he can expect grave results. When his agricultural and mining practices strip topsoils and forests, man destroys God's possessions, depletes the resources for which he is accountable to God, and deprives future generations of their security and sustenance.

The Nation's Farms

Basic to the pronouncements dealing with agriculture is the assumption that the demand and distribution side of the farm problem is the proper one to approach for solution. The problem of feeding the hungry is world-wide, and our agricultural economy suffers not from overproduction but from underconsumption and from the lack of proper distribution of existing food supplies.

The Assembly also recognizes the responsibility of government to regulate the farm output. The general welfare requires only that amount of freedom of action which is consistent with stability in the agricultural industry and

The 168th General Assembly
Urges Christian farmers and their urban brothers to seek national policies to solve the dilemma now so apparent in the cost-price squeeze and attendant problems, assuring continued existence of the family type farm, and encouraging a bountiful production to meet human needs;

Reaffirms the declaration of the 166th General Assembly dealing with problems of agriculture and rural life;

Commends the work of Town and Country agencies of the National Council of Churches and the Presbyterian Church for their work in bringing mutual understanding between rural and urban people, and

recommends continuing action in this field.

Low Income Families

Noting (1) that despite stability of our national economy and our continued economic growth, millions of American families, both rural and urban, are living in a continuing state of poverty and depression, and are not sharing in the over-all advances in living standards and the economic well-being of our nation; (2) that one out of every ten families in the United States still receives a money income of less than \$1,000 per year, and that approximately 50 per cent of American farm families have an annual money income of \$2,000 or less; and (3)

with equality of opportunity between farming and other occupations. Experience shows that the government must play a primary role.

In the following table, illustrating the cost-price squeeze, *prices received by farmers for the commodities they sell are expressed as a percentage of the 1910-1914 base period; prices paid by farmers for commodities and services used in farming and family living are likewise expressed as a percentage of the 1910-1914 average; parity ratio measures the relationship between prices received and prices paid:*

	Prices Received	Prices Paid	Parity Ratio
November, 1954	242%	279%	87%
November, 1954	225%	279%	81%

For a long time there has been a hot debate over farm policies and problems. The farmers themselves have been deeply divided. Ranchers, corn and wheat farmers, dairymen, have sought solutions that would benefit their own particular group. No single policy has been developed as yet that would benefit all groups equally. The high prices that would help the wheat and corn farmers are an anathema to the dairymen who need low-priced feed in order to come out even. The pronouncements call upon Christian farmers and their families to seek mutual understanding of their various problems and needs, and stress co-operative efforts that will seek the greatest good for all.

The Presbyterian Rural Fellowship, which includes in its membership the ministers of "town and country" churches, has recently appointed a social education and action committee under the chairmanship of the Rev. Earle B. Harris, Jr., of Dawson, Minnesota. Members of the committee alert the Presbyterian Rural Fellowship in matters of social concern, and work with the Counseling Committee on Social Education and Action and the staff of the Department in studying social, economic, and political problems and bringing recommendations to the General Assembly.

that we have favorable opportunity in this period of economic abundance for new and vigorous programs to assist people in impoverished areas to improve their earning power and level of living and to attack other problems of low-income groups,

The 168th General Assembly
Calls the churches to recognize their obligations to ensure a continuing ministry to all persons regardless of their ability to pay for it—adequate building facilities, program, and educated leadership;

Calls upon all our churches to work for public policies in such areas as housing, health, education, police protection, courts, social security, and public welfare programs, as instruments through which God can work in redeeming his creation and through which churches can witness to his power to heal the sick and raise the dead;

Commends inner-city churches, such as the East Harlem Protestant Parish, for their work in bringing

the gospel to unchurched people of low-income families and for their work in witnessing the gospel to the whole life of a community;

Reaffirms the pronouncements concerning migrant workers of the 166th General Assembly and recommends responsible action by individuals and local churches to extend Christian fellowship to migrants, and to work for adequate legislation to provide for their needs;

Calls upon Congress and appropriate departments of the Government to expand rather than contract programs of rehabilitation, improved schools, vocational training, land conservation and improvement, and more effective extension services, low-cost supervised farm credit, and technical assistance to low-income families in farm and urban areas; and

Calls upon Federal and state legislatures and municipal governments to develop tax plans that do not place added burdens on the chronically poor.

Families with Low Income

Particularly important in the section on low-income families is the reference to low-cost supervised farm credit. Over the years the Farmers Home Administration has helped many low-income families to improve their economic situation by providing technical advice and assistance as well as loans. The General Assembly pronouncements recommend the extension of this program.

With respect to the Church's ministry to migratory agricultural workers, a continuing problem has been the patronizing attitude of many local congregations which have co-operated with Church agencies working in the migrant camps. Many sincere Christians have looked upon their service to migrants as "doing something for these poor benighted people," rather than working to make the town or village a more friendly and responsible community during the season when the transient families were "in residence." A smile or greeting at the village grocery store, an invitation to join in a church project or an excursion to the seashore, may be more appreciated and helpful in creating Christian fellowship than a few old clothes or a "worship service" transported to the camp.

More important than either may be a call upon local authorities or the state legislature to petition for more adequate public policies regarding migratory workers and their families.

IV. IN COMMUNITY RELATIONS

BELEIVING that our churches have an important role to play in their communities by joining forces with other churches and agencies in meeting human needs;

Acknowledging that churches often fail to face realistically community changes which require new understandings and new approaches, and that churches all too frequently isolate themselves from their communities by their own church-centered programs which tend to blind their members to the needs of their neighborhoods and the wider concerns of city, state, and nation;

Believing that many, if not most, of the great social issues of the day are reflected in our communities,

that here every Christian citizen, as well as the churches themselves, can join in the world-wide struggle for justice, equality, and freedom,

The 168th General Assembly

Encourages the Department of Social Education and Action to develop study and action materials related to the role of the churches in community life; and

Urges local congregations to give strong leadership and support to their community councils of churches, and in communities where such councils do not exist, to take steps to bring Protestant communions together in order that all Christians in all communities may have organized channels through which to share their concern.

The Church and the Community

Churches do not exist in a vacuum. Churches and their members should be deeply concerned about the forces and events in their communities that deeply affect the destinies of people.

Community life in many parts of the country suffers from spreading blight and deterioration, a disease brought about by neglect and lack of concern on the part of residents and community leaders.

Some churches have merited the criticism of community groups that they are concerned about community life only when some phase of their program is directly affected. It is true that most churches take action only when the areas immediately surrounding them are changing, and have done little to prevent blight from taking hold before it is too late.

Many urban communities suffer today because of unco-ordinated, piecemeal planning. Problems are largely ignored until the situation becomes so critical as to threaten a large number of the population. Ministers and church members who serve their community in many roles have a special vantage point for seeing the need for community planning as a whole and for seeking to bring unco-ordinated groups together.

Available to churches wishing to study their role in community life is *The Church and the Community*, a guide to community action, developed for the Department of Social Education and Action by Dr. Samuel Blizzard of Pennsylvania State University. This study guide is probably unique in that it provides excellent background information for the leaders of groups and a useful working outline for group discussion. The Discussion Guide, 50 cents, and the Instructor's Manual, \$1.00, are available from the nearest Presbyterian Distribution Service.

V. IN EDUCATION

BELIEVING that education is a phase of community life with which the Church should be greatly concerned;

Noting that in our democracy which is committed to universal education there are at present nearly 1,000,000 children without full-time schooling;

Realizing, moreover, the critical need for 140,000 more teachers and 203,000 more classrooms;

Recognizing the deterioration of our educational facilities as a threat to the Church itself and believing that immediate action is necessary in light of facts brought out by the White House Conference, which said:

"This Committee also recommends that every community and every state do all that is economically possible to construct the buildings required, and that during such emergency periods as now exist, Federal funds also be used wherever shown to be necessary. In the richest nation in all history, there is no valid reason for the grimy, dilapidated, and overcrowded school buildings which too many children now occupy. It is an ironic truth that most Americans would not per-

mit their children to live in a house which is as bad as the school buildings which many pupils are forced by law to attend";

Believing that churches can do much in their communities to increase respect for the teaching profession and for intellectual and cultural pursuits,

The 168th General Assembly

Re-examines its previous pronouncements on Federal aid to strengthen public education and reaffirms its support of such Federal contributions to education as shall be applied exclusively to the aid of tax-supported public schools, on condition that the funds be (1) allocated according to a formula that moves toward full educational opportunity in the public elementary and secondary schools, in the various sections of the nation, and, within the states in both urban and rural districts; (2) safeguarded against the imposition of Federal control in matters of educational policy and administration; and (3) administered with a minimum of administrative costs;

Recommends to local communities that they make full use of their resources before requesting Federal aid;

America's Schools

The General Assembly's endorsement of Federal aid to education is very significant because of the flurry of opposition which came as a result of the action of the 1955 General Assembly in approving a similar statement. The Standing Committee's reply to the overtures dealing with Federal aid to education, on pages 29-31, suggests the reasons for our endorsement.

There are some who advocate a "civil rights rider" to such resolutions as the one adopted by the General Assembly in support of Federal aid to education. It should be pointed out:

Urge the churches to encourage qualified young people to enter the teaching profession as a Christian vocation and to encourage adult members, who are qualified to teach but who are not now so engaged, to return to teaching as a form of Christian service;

Approve the use of assistants who may not have had professional

training but might serve as aids to regular teachers; and

Encourages Christians to take the initiative in seeking to establish citizens' groups to work with professional groups in the interests of public education, such as the National Citizens' Commission for Public Schools and the White House Conference on Education.

VI. IN CITIZENSHIP

ANTICIPATING the coming political campaigns and elections,

The 168th General Assembly

Calls upon all judicatories and local congregations in the Presbyterian Church to exercise the right and duty they have to study and discuss social issues that may be called "controversial"; to exercise their further right and duty to ar-

rive at group decisions about Christian positions in regard to these issues; and to exercise their right and duty to communicate these decisions to appropriate bodies and persons when such decisions will help them carry out their functions in a free nation;

Calls upon church members to look upon service in a particular

1. That our Church's pronouncements on segregation make very clear our position that Federal aid cannot and should not be extended to segregated school systems;

2. An antidiscrimination clause in our statement on Federal aid would place us definitely on the side of the so-called Powell Amendment to the Federal aid bills before Congress at the present time;

3. The Powell Amendment, if it were enacted and became law, would have the effect of removing jurisdiction of the implementation of the Supreme Court decision (on desegregation of public schools) from the Federal courts to local and state school administrative authorities;

4. Moreover, if the Powell Amendment were approved as a part of any Federal aid bill, it would virtually kill the possibility of that bill's being enacted by Congress—a fact so well and so widely understood that many enemies of Federal aid are supporting the Powell Amendment as a sure way to kill Federal aid;

5. The Department of Social Education and Action feels that we need a pronouncement on Federal aid at the present time that is "unentangled";

6. If the tactical situation should change, we have ample basis in other pronouncements of this and other years for supporting an antidiscrimination amendment.

Christian Responsibility in an Election Year

The pronouncement on citizenship speaks for itself. It reminds us of the right and duty of the Church and of groups in the Church to study and discuss social issues that are sensitive and sometimes controversial. It also reminds

political party as an effective method for Christians to witness and work for good government;

Calls the attention of the churches to the pronouncements on Christian citizenship approved by the 160th and the 164th General Assemblies, setting forth imperatives

for Christians in an election year;

Calls upon Christians to work for the removal of the poll tax and other restrictions which prevent many American citizens from exercising their legal rights at the polls, and which affront the dignity of men.

VII. IN CIVIL LIBERTIES

RECONIZING that false concepts of patriotism are still being advanced by extremist groups who continue their attempts to stifle free expression and honest dissent,

The 168th General Assembly

Commends to the attention of the churches the pronouncements of the 165th and 167th General Assemblies on human rights and freedom, and the General Council's Letter to Presbyterians of November, 1953.

VIII. IN OTHER AREAS OF SOCIAL CONCERN

The 168th General Assembly

Calls the attention of the churches to previous pronouncements of

The 165th and 166th General As-

semblies—on problems of alcohol;

The 166th General Assembly—on gambling;

The 165th and 166th General Assemblies—on narcotics.

us of the duty and right of churches to arrive at decisions regarding controversial issues and to communicate these decisions to units of government and to other bodies as may be appropriate.

Christians should be reminded again and again of the importance of belonging to a political party and of being active in the party on the precinct level. Only as one participates in politics on this level can one really help to influence the selection of candidates for public office. "Belonging" to a party does not mean, however, that one has to vote the straight party ticket, or to act otherwise than as an independent, in the major elections.

The reference in the pronouncements to the poll tax, and to our Christian duty to do all we can to remove this and other restrictions, is exceedingly timely and important. Many believe that only as these restrictions are removed, so that all citizens without fear or favor have the right to vote as they please, can human rights be advanced in some of our states.

The June issue of *SOCIAL PROGRESS*, "A Christian's Guide to Political Action," is highly recommended as a useful guide for Christian citizens in an election year. Extra copies are available for distribution among church officers and leaders.

Also available is a pamphlet, *Questions for Christians in 1956*, which outlines some of our Christian concerns and responsibilities in reference to the fall elections. These may be secured from your nearest Presbyterian Distribution Service (10 cents each).

IN CONCLUSION

IN CONCLUSION the 168th General Assembly affirms

—that Christian action in society is not a hobby for those who are interested, nor is it a specialized phase of the Church's work;

—that the redemption of the cross is most fully preached when the Church corporately brings to bear the judgment of God against evil wherever it is seen and seeks at every point of suffering and wrong to reveal the grace of God in the

possibilities for salvation, wholeness, and healing;

—that this is in fact the nature and mission of the Church;

—that no church is faithful unless it is constantly finding its life in engagement with the demonic forces already overcome by Christ who has given his Church power to exorcise them until his Kingdom is consummated.

Respectfully submitted,
James Nesbitt, Chairman

In Conclusion

A traditional concept of the Church's mission in relation to the forces of evil in our world is that it is a kind of "spiritual filling station." According to this view, the function of the Church is to equip individual Christians on Sunday, and perhaps during a midweek service, to go out and bring to bear their individual influence against the devil and his company. The implication of the concluding statement of the pronouncements is that such individual efforts and such a concept of the function of the Church are inadequate in making any appreciable change in a social order.

The emphasis is upon the *corporate* action of the Church as it brings the judgment of God to bear upon evil wherever it is found. Such a corporate witness of the Church is thoroughly consonant, not only with the Bible, but also with our Presbyterian heritage from the time of Calvin.

The Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Evanston also had some important things to say about this corporate responsibility of the Church: "What then are the concerns of evangelism? One is surely so to proclaim the gospel that it will transform the groupings and the patterns of society in which men and women are involved, to the end that human institutions and structures may more nearly conform to the divine intention."

Few persons would dispute that it is the nature and mission of the Church to preach the redemption of the cross to every creature. That this includes acts of benevolence and charity is also beyond debate. Some Christians believe, however, that social action on the part of the Church is a hobby for those who happen to be interested in it. The pronouncements deny this and make it quite clear that, in the belief of the General Assembly, the corporate action and witness of the Church in bringing the judgment and mercy of God to the social, economic, and political power structures of the world are in fact the Church's true nature and mission.

Federal Aid to Education

Overture 15—Indianapolis

Whereas, the Social Education and Action Committee of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America has written in the Social Deliverances of the 167th General Assembly [*Minutes* of the General Assembly, 1955, Part I, page 223], stating,

“We reaffirm former pronouncements that Federal aid be approved to strengthen public education . . .”;

Whereas, there is much controversy as to whether a program of Federal aid to education is the best solution to the problems facing our schools;

Whereas, the following facts are set forth:

1. The report of the Commission on Inter-Governmental Relations, Mr. Meyer Kestnbaum, Chairman (this commission had a “Study Committee on Federal Responsibility in the Field of Education”), expressed strong reservations about a program of Federal aid to education as follows:

“The Commission recommends that responsibility for providing general public education continue to rest squarely upon the states and their political subdivisions. The Commission further recommends that the states act vigorously and promptly to discharge this responsi-

bility. The Commission does not recommend a general program of Federal financial assistance to elementary and secondary education, believing that the states have the capacity to meet their educational requirements.”

2. The White House Conference on Education, which met in November, 1955, and which was quoted as favoring Federal aid for school construction, officially found that

“No state represented has a demonstrated financial incapacity to build the schools it will need during the next five years.”

3. Dr. John J. Tigert, a former U.S. Commissioner of Education, then president of the University of Florida, testified before a Congressional committee some twenty years ago, with this admonition:

“Eight years of service in the U.S. Bureau of Education convinced me that Federal support in public education would not be desirable. . . . Federal money would be followed by Federal interference.”

4. Dr. S. M. Brownell, present U.S. Commissioner of Education, has asked,

“If Federal aid and control [of education] does not prove to be satisfactory, what is the chance of change away from Federal support and control?”

5. John Foster Dulles, in a 1949 address before the American Polit-

cal Science Association, went to the heart of the matter when he said,

"Would not our youth for the first time in our history be subjected to the risk of indoctrination by whoever might at a single time come into power at a single place?"

6. Dean Luther A. Weigle, dean emeritus of the Yale Divinity School, has stated that

"It is not possible to distribute Federal funds for education without the imposition of an increasing measure of Federal control in matters of educational policy. Federal control of education, at any level, would be calamitous";

Whereas, the pronouncements made by the 167th General Assembly appear to reflect and speak the mind of the whole Church:

Therefore, we, the members of the Indianapolis Presbytery, meeting in regular session at Martinsville, Indiana, March 19, 1956, respectfully overture the 168th General Assembly as follows:

1. That the Social Education and

Action Committee of the 1956 General Assembly re-examine their pronouncement on Federal aid to education.

2. That in the re-examination, thoughtful consideration be given to the fact that our investigations reveal no instance of Federally supported programs without accompanying or subsequent Federal controls.

3. That the Constitution of the United States and the constitutions of its several states clearly designate education as a field reserved to state and local government and tradition and practice have followed and confirmed this constitutional prescription.

4. That we sincerely doubt that the present pronouncement by the Standing Committee of Social Education and Action reflects the true mind of the whole Church.

Thirty-six presbyteries concurred; twenty-two presbyteries did not concur.

Overture 24—Riverside

Whereas there is much controversy as to whether a program of Federal aid to education is the best solution to the problems facing our schools, the Presbytery of Riverside, while approving in general the pronouncements of the 1955 General Assembly concerning education, nevertheless requests the Social Education and Action Committee of the 1956 Assembly, meeting at Phila-

delphia, Pa., May 24, to re-examine the pronouncement of the 1955 Assembly as found on page 223 of the Minutes of the General Assembly, 1955, Part I, as follows:

"We reaffirm former pronouncements that Federal aid be approved to strengthen public education, such aid to be given to the states according to their needs, and to be administered by the states."

Standing Committee Report on Overtures 15 and 24

The Standing Committee on Social Education and Action has re-examined the pronouncements of our Church regarding Federal aid to education, as requested in Overture 15 and Overture 24, and recommends no change in the position taken by the General Assembly in 1950, 1953, 1954, 1955, for the following reasons:

Background

The American people have always believed that an educated citizenry is of paramount importance to the national interest.

Beginning in 1785 the government has engaged in various forms of Federal aid and services to education—authorizing grants of public lands to help establish school systems, making grants to states in support of resident instruction at land-grant colleges, supporting vocational education through the Smith Hughes Act and other programs, constructing school buildings in the 1930's as a part of the emergency public works program, and granting aid for the construction and operation of schools in areas especially affected by Federal activities. Further participation has been seen in such specialized activities as defense research, school lunch programs, and veterans programs.

It is a matter of record that in all of these instances the Federal Government has scrupulously avoided interfering in matters of educational policy.

President Eisenhower states in his message to Congress on January 12, 1956: "But our history has demonstrated that the Federal Government, in the interest of the whole people, can and should help with certain problems of nation-wide scope and concern when states and communities—acting independently—cannot solve the full problem or solve it rapidly enough. Clearly this is the kind of situation we face today in considering the school classroom shortage."

During the depression years of the 1930's few schools were built. During the war years even fewer classrooms were built. An unusually sharp rise in the birth rate following World War II, coupled with heavy migrations of population, have compounded the difficulties. Today millions of children attend schools which are unsafe or which are too old, too shabby, or too cramped. Well over half a million additional children attend half-day school sessions. Each year the classroom deficit increases despite an all-time high in school construction by the states and local governments. In many parts of the nation operating expenditures are at new heights, but

must be further increased to raise teachers' salaries to subsistence levels. This, in turn, results in less revenue available to meet the school shortage. The total cost of meeting school plant needs by 1959-1960 will be \$16,014,000,000.

The Issues

Clearly we are confronted with a national emergency. The White House Conference recognized this fact. Both Democrats and Republicans in Congress recognize it. President Eisenhower's message to Congress recognizes it. All of these responsible officials have called for Federal aid.

Educational policy matters have traditionally been a responsibility of state and local governments, as have other matters of primarily local interest. The promotion of the general welfare is a responsibility specifically assigned to the Congress by the Constitution. The interrelation of these responsibilities required to cope with the present emergency was recognized by the report of the Commission on Inter-Governmental Relations of June 20, 1955: "But there is nothing incompatible between the national interest in an educated citizenry and our tradition of leaving responsibility for general public education to the states."

The Citations

It should be noted that the so-called "facts" cited in Overture 15 are quoted out of context.

Contrary to the implication of "fact" number 1 in Overture 15, the Commission on Inter-Governmental Relations recommended Federal assistance to the states temporarily in financing school construction, and opposed Federal aid only as a permanent general program.

The White House Conference on Education, held in Washington last December, concluded that Federal aid is necessary, and embodied an appropriate recommendation in its report to the President.

We also note that Dr. John J. Tigert, one-time U.S. Commissioner of Education, and the present Commissioner, Dr. S. M. Brownell, have publicly endorsed Federal assistance in this emergency, despite the citations in the Overture. The Committee finds no merit in the citing of an opinion held twenty years ago, since the school situation obviously has changed in the last two decades.

"Federal Control"

The pending measures in Congress looking to Federal aid carry no implication at all of Federal interference with instructional methods or policies.

The Committee is convinced that the risk of Federal control in matters of educational policy is more imagined than real in the light of past performance of the Federal Government in education. We are supported in this conviction by the President of the United States, the House Committee on Education and Labor, a majority of the Senators and Congress-

men who have expressed themselves, the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, the White House Conference on Education, the Commission on Inter-Governmental Relations, the National Education Association, and 67 per cent of the people polled by the American Institute of Public Opinion in January, 1956.

—*Elder James Nesbitt*, Chairman,
Standing Committee on Social Education and Action.

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